Gerard has registered; he joins me in the Luxembourg. He counts on my zeal, on my sagacity, on any qualities I may have, to get Ventura for him.

Together we go to the Athenee to reserve a box for this evening.

Thursday morning

Hofmannsthal's visit and walk with him in the Luxembourg,

The role of Esther, in which she was once so perfect herself, is not to Ventura's liking. Today actors — and in this they are like the authors — are not willing that taste should come before what they consider strength.

This is saying a rather simple thing in a very complicated way. Am I tired from last night? . . . though I have been trying for five minutes, I cannot find a simpler way of saying it.

This notebook was begun to teach me to write more easily.

I write this while still in bed and yet the weather is radiant. At one o'clock we leave for Cuverville. Hofmannsthal is to come at ten o'clock and Gerard at nine. As we separated last night: "You have just undone in an hour the work of a month/' he told me. Since I understood absolutely nothing in these mysterious words, I begged him to come and explain them to me this morning.

In the train, Thursday

That lady opposite us with the beautiful forehead unmarked by wrinkles, with very black hair already turning gray, who takes out of a little handbag a book in Arabic and reads it without apparently feeling the amazement in my eyes —how I should have liked to strike up a conversation with her! Remarkable resemblance to Augustine de Rothmaler and *spiritual* resemblance to Anna Shaddeton.

I recognized (yesterday at the *Ermitage)* in Gourmont's conversation what sets my nerves on edge in his books; when he says, for instance; "I have come to like only the newspapers that have no litera-

ture in them," he says it in such a way as to imply; "Oh, I know you are not like that, but that doesn't matter; I am right."

"I shall use to cure you the means that have always succeeded with me/' Ventura told Gerard: "allow you to see me often."

What Gerard blames me for is having, by last night's conversation, reawakened in Ventura's mind the image of de Mak, which, Gerard claims, was beginning to pale.

Cuverville

I remember the days of my youth when happiness dwelt in my heart like a god.